

Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security



Standard Operating Procedures

SOP: 5.4

Issued: 9/2007

Revised: 7/21/2009

APPROVAL OF ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERT)

Background:

On July 20, 2006, the Office of the Attorney General for the State of Connecticut issued a legal opinion that confirms that volunteer members of the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are covered under the State of Connecticut Workers' Compensation Program, when certain statutory conditions are met.

In order for volunteer civil preparedness force members to receive benefits under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-14, the local Emergency Management Director must receive prior approval from the Commissioner of DEMHS to authorize their activation. See Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-7(h). In order to provide a standardized process for CERT teams to be activated by DEMHS for purposes of Connecticut General Statutes Title 28 protection to assist in an emergency, a major planned event, or to engage in training under the auspices of DEMHS, this Standard Operating Procedure and accompanying forms were created. This procedure should be used in the following situations, when DEMHS approval is appropriate:

- Emergency Situations where the incident is beyond the capability of other municipal resources;
- **Major planned events where the event is beyond the capability of other municipal resources; and**
- Training occurring under the auspices of DEMHS.

The following are guidelines established for the local emergency management community to follow when requesting DEMHS approval of any emergency activation or training activity in order to ensure that the CERT volunteer members' training and/or participation in an event or disaster are covered under the opinion issued by the Office of the Attorney General. For further information on

DEMHS approval of CERT activations, please see **DEMHS Advisory Bulletin 2009-1, revised July 21, 2009.**

Procedures for Local Emergency Management Director to Follow to Obtain DEMHS Approval:

1. Local Procedures in an Emergency Activation

Whenever the local Emergency Management Director (EMD) or local civil preparedness director deems it necessary to activate the members of the CERT through DEMHS in the case of an imminent or actual emergency, he/she will:

- Request DEMHS approval through the Regional Coordinator orally or by email, or by page if the request is made after regular business hours. Make sure that a response is received from the Regional Coordinator so that you know the request has been received;
- Follow up with a written request as soon as possible, but not more than **48** hours after the initial request is made.

The written request shall contain:

- Date and anticipated times of the activation;
- Names of the CERT members involved;
- Reason for the activation or training request, including details of the activities to be taken or that have been taken.

By submitting the names of the Team members, the local EMD is certifying that these members have received appropriate training under the Local Citizens Corps organization, and have been sworn in annually under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-12, or are in training to be sworn in under that section.

CERT members who self-dispatch to an emergency scene without the approval of the local EMD will not receive Title 28 protection through DEMHS.

The local EMD shall maintain a log (See attached Sample) of all emergency activation requests submitted to DEMHS.

The local EMD shall also maintain a roster of current CERT members, including their names, contact information, and training received. Annually, the local EMD will provide an updated copy of this roster to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator. Under §28-12, all CERT members must be sworn in annually.

2. Local Procedures in a Training or Pre-planned Large Scale Event Activation

Whenever the local Emergency Management Director (EMD) or local civil preparedness director deems it necessary to activate the members of the CERT through DEMHS in the case of training or a large scale scheduled event, he/she will:

- Submit the request in writing to their respective Regional Coordinator **at least two weeks before the date of the proposed training or event.** Training or event activities submitted after the date cannot be approved by DEMHS;
- If the request is submitted by fax, the EMD must provide the original documentation to the Regional Coordinator as soon as possible.

REMEMBER, certain activities may not rise to the level of a DEMHS activation (e.g., handing out brochures at a local fair or traveling to the annual state Citizen Corps or CERT conference. See DEMHS Advisory Bulletin No. 2009-1, revised July 21, 2009, for more details.)

The written request for DEMHS approval shall contain:

- Date and anticipated times of the activation;
- Names of all CERT members anticipated to be involved;
- Reason for the activation or training request, including details of the activities to be taken.

If the EMD wishes to submit one form for multiple activities, specific information must be provided for each training activity.

By submitting the names of the Team members, the local EMD is certifying that these members have received appropriate training under the Local Citizens Corps organization, and have been sworn in annually under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-12, or are in training to be sworn in under that section.

The local EMD shall maintain a log (See attached Sample) of all training or pre-planned event requests submitted to DEMHS, for review by either the Office of Attorney General and or by DEMHS.

The local EMD will maintain a roster of current CERT members, including their names, contact information, and training received. Annually, the local EMD will provide an updated copy of this roster to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator. Under §28-12, all CERT members must be sworn in annually.

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Procedures for DEMHS Staff To Follow in CERT Approval Process

1. DEMHS Procedures in an Emergency Activation

In an emergency situation, the Regional Coordinator shall:

- Review the request of the local EMD;

- Forward the request with a recommendation of approval or denial, based upon the information submitted by the local EMD, to the DEMHS Director. If the recommendation is to deny the request, the Regional Coordinator will provide a brief explanation.

It is also the responsibility of the Regional Office to:

- Notify the local EMD of the Director's approval or denial of the activation request (see below);
- Obtain the original written request within 48 hours of approval;
- Supply the requesting EMD with a copy of the completed documentation;
- Maintain a log (see attached Sample) of all requests submitted to that office.

The DEMHS Director shall:

- Approve or deny the request;
- Provide notification of the activation/denial to:
 - DEMHS Regional Coordinator (who will notify the requesting jurisdiction);
 - Commissioner;
 - Deputy Commissioner;
 - Other Regional Coordinators;
 - Duty Officers;
 - DEMHS Operations Supervisor;
 - DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator;
 - DEMHS Legal Advisor.

In the absence of the Director, the request for approval may go to the Office of the Commissioner. **At his/her discretion, the Director or Commissioner may designate approval authority to one or more DEMHS employees during a particular emergency situation.**

Within 48 hours, written paperwork to support the activation must be submitted by the local requester, through the DEMHS Regional Office, to the Office of the Director. The Office of the Director shall:

- Keep the original documentation;
- Forward fully executed copies to (a) the Regional Office and (b) the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator;
- Maintain a log of all emergency requests submitted to DEMHS.

2. DEMHS Procedures in a Training or Pre-planned Large Scale Event Authorization

When the Regional Coordinator receives a request for DEMHS CERT training or pre-planned large scale event authorization, s/he must:

- Review the request of the local EMD;

- Forward the request with a recommendation of approval or denial to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator, and a copy to the Office of the Commissioner. If the recommendation is to deny the request, the Regional Coordinator will provide a brief explanation;¹
- Supply the requesting EMD with a copy of the completed documentation;
- Make sure that original documentation is provided to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator for any request that has been faxed in for review;
- Maintain a log (see attached Sample) of all training and scheduled event requests submitted to that office.

The DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator shall:

- Review the request;
- Recommend approval or denial. If the recommendation is to deny the request, the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator will provide a brief explanation;
- Forward the request to the Office of the Commissioner, with a copy to the Regional Coordinator.

The Commissioner-- or in his absence, his designee²--shall approve or deny the request and return the paperwork to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator, who shall:

- Notify the Regional Coordinator (who shall notify the requesting jurisdiction);
- Also notify:
 - Commissioner
 - Deputy Commissioner
 - Director
 - DEMHS Legal Advisor.
- Send a fully executed copy of the documentation to the Regional Coordinator;
- Maintain the original paperwork in a log of all CERT training/pre-planned large scale events.

Filing a Claim for Workers' Compensation:

In the event that a CERT volunteer member is injured in either a pre-approved training or real emergency event, the following procedures will be followed to file a claim with the State of Connecticut Workers' Compensation Commission.

The local EMD will immediately make sure that the CERT member is treated for any medical issue and take all reasonable efforts to prevent further injury to the CERT member or other members.

Once the immediate medical situation is stabilized, the local EMD will notify the DEMHS Regional Coordinator of the details of the accident/ injury to the member(s) of the CERT. In addition, the local EMD will contact the third party administrator for the State of Connecticut:

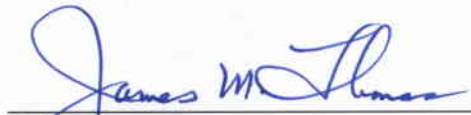
¹ In the absence of the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator, the Commissioner may receive the request directly. The Commissioner will approve or deny, and the notifications and paperwork will be handled by the Office of the Commissioner, with originals provided to the DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator.

² In the absence of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner or the DEMHS Director may approve or deny the request.

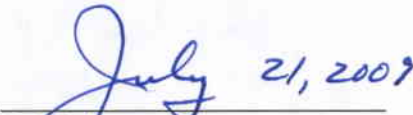
GAB Robbins North America, Inc
800 Connecticut Boulevard
East Hartford, CT 06108
Telephone # 860-256-3400
Fax# 860-291-9875

The DEMHS Regional Coordinator will immediately notify the DEMHS Emergency Management Director and DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator of the accident/ injury. The DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator will then notify the Office of the Commissioner of the injury.

The DEMHS CERT Teams Coordinator will be the initial primary point of contact between the State of Connecticut and the local EMD in assuring that the proper paperwork relating to the accident/injury is completed by the CERT member, as well as by the supervisor of the local CERT.



JAMES M. THOMAS
COMMISSIONER



DATE